

Winter Driving Safety

The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents. Preparing your vehicle for the winter season and knowing how to react if stranded or lost on the road are the keys to safe winter driving. Here are some tips that may help you stay safe this season.



First, have the following items on your car inspected before you travel:

- Battery, Antifreeze, Thermostat
- Wipers and windshield washer fluid
- Ignition system, Lights, Flashing hazard lights
- Exhaust system, Brakes
- Heater, Defroster
- Oil level (if necessary, replace existing oil with a winter grade oil or the SAE 10w/30 weight variety)
- Make sure tire tread is in good shape. All-weather radials are usually good for most winter conditions.

Second, keep a windshield scraper and small broom for ice and snow removal and maintain at least a half tank of gas during the winter season. Dress warmly by wearing layers of loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Check the travel conditions before heading out by listening to television and radio weather reports.



Keep these items in your car:

- Flashlights with extra batteries
- First aid kit with pocket knife
- Necessary medications
- Blankets, gloves, hats
- Jumper cables
- Flashlight



Third, pay attention to your body. Frostbite is a severe reaction to cold exposure that can cause permanent damage. A loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, or nose and ear lobes are symptoms of frostbite. Hypothermia is a condition brought on when the body temperature drops to less than 90°F. Symptoms of hypothermia include uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, frequent stumbling, drowsiness, and exhaustion. Never drink anything with caffeine in it (like coffee or tea) or alcohol. Caffeine, a stimulant, can cause the heart to beat faster and hasten the effects the cold has on the body. Alcohol, a depressant, can slow the heart and also hasten the ill effects of cold body temperatures.

